(c) whether it is proposed to take a decision in this behalf before March, 1977, in order to encourage and achieve the progress of these Castes ?

SRI D. DEVARAJ URS (Chief Minister).—

(a) The matter is being examined.

(b) No.

(c) A decision will be taken as early as possible.

Smuggling of forest timber

259. SRI M. S. KRISHNAN (Malleswaram).—Will the Minister for Food and Forests be pleased to state :—

(a) whether the Government is aware that forests in the State are being denuded by Contractors who fell trees indiscriminately and smuggle them outside the State ;

(b) if so, the action taken against such smugglers ;

(c) whether any such smugglers have been arrested and detained ; if so, the names of the smugglers and when they were arrested ;

(d) whether some of the smugglers of forest timber, who were detained have been released ; if so, the reasons for the same ?

SRI K. H. PATIL (Minister for Food and Forests).—

(a) No.

(b) Does not arise in view of the reply to question (a) above.

(c) It is not advisable to reveal the names of the Timber Merchants in the public interest, even if they were arrested.

(d) Reply given to question (c) above stands.

Misappropriation cases in Forest Department, Mysore District

263. SRI K. SIDDAIAH (Santhemarahalli).—Will the Minister for Food and Forests be pleased to state —

(a) the number of cases of misappropriation pending before Government in Forest Department in Mysore District and the total amount involved during the last 3 years;

(b) out of them, the number of cases pending for more than 1 year and more than 3 years (to be given separately);

(c) the number of officers or officials kept under suspension pending enquiry for more than one year;

(*d*) the number of Class I and II Officers, if any, involved in respect of cases mentioned in Clause (*a*) and the amount involved?

SRI K. H. PATIL (Minister for Food and Forests).—

(*a*) (*b*), (*c*) and (*d*) Nil.

Filling up of posts of Vety. and Livestock Inspector

317. SRI B. M. HORAKERI (Guledgud).—Will the Minister of State for Animal Husbandry be pleased to state.—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that a number of Vety. and Livestock Inspectors posts are vacant in the State;

(*b*) whether it is also a fact that most of the Vety. and Livestock Inspectors are holding charge of more than one post for the last 2—3 years;

(*c*) whether Government is aware that timely and adequate Vety. medical aid and services are not made available to the animals in the State;

(*d*) whether the Drought Prone Area Programme, Small Farmers Devt. Agency and Marginal Farmers and Agril. Labourers have increased the Vety. Service work;

(*e*) if so, the steps taken by the Government to recruit the required staff?

SRI B. G. BANAKAR (Minister of State for Animal Husbandry).—

(*a*) Yes.

(*b*) Yes.

(*c*) No.

(*d*) Yes.

(*e*) The following steps are under consideration :

1. Direct recruitment and
2. Re-employment of retired persons.

Absence of Members and the Minister to take up

Calling Attention Notice

SRI V. M. GHADI.—I call the attention of the Minister for Labour to the hardship caused due to the strike in the West Coast Paper Mills, Dandeli.

MADAM SPEAKER.—The Hon. Minister is not present to reply to the calling attention notice. We shall take up the next one.